GLC 63 WRITINGS. THIS BRIDGE CALLED MY BACK [review by [25 pages] 1/58
CAMERON
Linda Boyd of reading, and program] [198-]

Persephone Press presents

THIS BRIDGE CALLED MY BACK

AN EVENING OF READINGS, MUSIC, ART, & FOOD BY RADICAL WOMEN OF COLOR

RACISM IN THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT
THE ROOTS OF OUR RADICALISM
ON CULTURE, CLASS AND HOMOPHOBIA
THE VISION

Friday, June 5th at 8 p.m.
Arlington Street Church

AURORA LEVINS MORALES
BARBARA CAMERON
BARBARA SMITH
BEVERLY SMITH
CHERRÍE MORAGA
GLORIA ANZALDÚA
hattie gossett
KATE RUSHIN
NELLIE WONG
ROSARIO MORALES

Art exhibit by:
Johnetta Tinker, featuring her work from THIS BRIDGE CALLED MY BACK

Catering by:
Demita (Garden of Sensual Delights)

About Persephone Press

PERSEPHONE PRESS was founded in April 1976 by a lesbian-feminist collective, Pomegranate Productions. Our intention was to build an autonomous lesbian-feminist publishing network to encourage and ensure global communication among women, without patriarchal censorship.

Over the past five years, we have introduced invaluable reading to the women's movement. *The Wanderground* has introduced a vision to women across the world. *The Coming Out Stories* has validated the experience of naming oneself as a lesbian in American society. "The knowledge to be gained by reading [*Woman, Church and State*] can provide us with invaluable ammunition for making change." *Choices* has been cited as "the most popular lesbian novel since *Rubyfruit Jungle*." *Claiming an Identity They Taught Me to Despise,* which speaks to Cliff's experience as a Jamaican woman of color, has been hailed as a "powerful collection." *Lesbian Poetry: An Anthology* is a collection of our finest contemporary lesbian poets.

Today, we are proud to present *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color.* Forthcoming titles include:

Lifetime Guarantee: A Journey Through Loss and Survival (Alice Bloch)
Lesbian Fiction: An Anthology (Elly Bulkin, ed.)
Another Mother Tongue: Stories From the Ancient Gay Tradition (Judy Grahn)
I've Been Standing on This Street-Corner A Hell of A Long Time!
A New Spelling of My Name (Audre Lorde)
The Jewish Lesbian Anthology (Evelyn Torton Beck, ed.)
Black Feminism: An Anthology (Barbara Smith, ed.)
Sinking, Stealing (Jan Clausen)

Persephone has entered the Eighties with a further intention of confronting and challenging heterosexism, racism, and conglomerate control/seizure of publishing. Multi-national corporations are presently buying up the publishing trade. Both independent publishers and booksellers are fighting these conglomerate monsters; without our survival, no aspect of "freedom of the press" can be ensured.

According to the *West Coast Review of Books*, "Persephone Press is on its way to becoming one of the leading specialized independent publishers in the nation." With your continued support, we will indeed have that autonomous lesbian-feminist publishing network to encourage and ensure global communication among women, without patriarchal censorship. Thank you.

Gloria Z. Greenfield

Pat McGloin

The Program

INTRODUCTION
Julia Perez

ACT ONE
Children Passing in the Streets
The Roots of Our Radicalism

Nellie Wong
When I Was Growing Up

Barbara Cameron
Gee, You Don't Seem Like An Indian from the Reservation

Kate Rushin
on not bein *by mary hope lee*

Gloria Anzaldúa
La Prieta

Nellie Wong
Heart of Rice Straw

ACT TWO
Between the Lines
On Culture, Class, and Homophobia

Rosario Morales
The Other Heritage

Nellie Wong
Invisibility Is An Unnatural Disaster *by Mitsuye Yamada*

Barbara Smith and Beverly Smith
Across the Kitchen Table: A Sister-to-Sister Dialogue

Aurora Levins Morales
And Even Fidel Can't Change That!

hattie gossett
Billie Lives!

ACT THREE

And When You Leave Take Your Pictures With You

Racism in the Women's Movement

Radical Women of Color
And When You Leave Take Your Pictures With You *by Jo Carrillo*

Radical Women of Color
Chile, Let Me Tell You: Racism Movement Style *by Kate Rushin*

Radical Women of Color
Naming Litany *by Barbara Cameron*

Beverly Smith
The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House *by Audre Lorde*

ACT FOUR

El Mundo Zurdo

The Vision

Aurora Levins Morales
Wonder Woman *by Genny Lim*

hattie gossett
Third World Sisters' Litany *by Toni Cade Bambara*

Gloria Anzaldúa
El Mundo Zurdo, The Third World Feminist Vision

Rosario Morales
Give Me Back *by Chrystos*

Barbara Cameron
No Rock Scorns Me As Whore *by Chrystos*

Kate Rushin
The Bridge Poem

Barbara Smith
The Irresistable Revolution *by Toni Cade Bambara*

Cherríe Moraga
In the Dream, I Am Always Met at the River

THE END

Reception immediately following.

El Programa

LA INTRODUCCIÓN
por Julia Perez

ACTO UNO
Las Niñas Pasando Por Las Calles
Las Raíces de Nuestro Radicalismo

Nellie Wong
Cuando yo esa niña

Barbara Cameron
¿De Veras?¡No Pareces India de La Reservación!

Kate Rushin
De No Ser *por mary hope lee*

Gloria Anzaldúa
La Prieta

Nellie Wong
El Corazón de Paja y Arroz

ACTO DOS
Entre Líneas
La Cultura, Clases Sociales, y Homofobia

Rosario Morales
La Otra Herencia

Nellie Wong
Invisibilidad Es Un Desastre Innatural *por Mitsuye Yamada*

Barbara Smith y Beverly Smith
En La Mesa de La Cocina: Un Diálogo Entre Hermanas

Aurora Levins Morales
¡Y Aun Fidel No Puede Cambiar Eso!

hattie gossett
¡ Billie Vive!

ACTO TRES

Cuando Te Vayas, Llévate Tus Cuadros Contigo
Racismo Dentro Del Movimiento De Mujeres

Mujeres Radicales de Color
Cuando Te Vayas, Llévate Tus Cuadros Contigo *por Jo Carrillo*

Mujeres Radicales de Color
Racismo a La Manera de Las Chicas Blancas *por Kate Rushin*

Mujeres Radicales de Color
Letanía de Los Nombres *por Barbara Cameron*

Beverly Smith
Las Herramientas del Patrón Nunca Desmontarán La Casa del Patrón *por Audre Lorde*

ACTO CUATRO

El Mundo Zurdo
La Visión

Aurora Levins Morales
La Mujer Maravilla *por Genny Lim*

hattie gossett
Letanía de Las Hermanas del Tercer Mundo *por Toni Cade Bambara*

Gloria Anzaldúa
El Mundo Zurdo—La Visión de La Feministas del Tercer Mundo

Rosario Morales
¡ Devuélvamelo! *por Chrystos*

Barbara Cameron
Ningúna Roca Me Desprecia, Ni Me Llama Puta *por Chrystos*

Kate Rushin
El Poema del Puente

Barbara Smith
La Revolución Irresistible *por Toni Cade Bambara*

Cherríe Moraga
En El Sueño, Alguien Siempre Me Encontraba En El Río

EL FIN

Una recepcion sigue immediatemente.

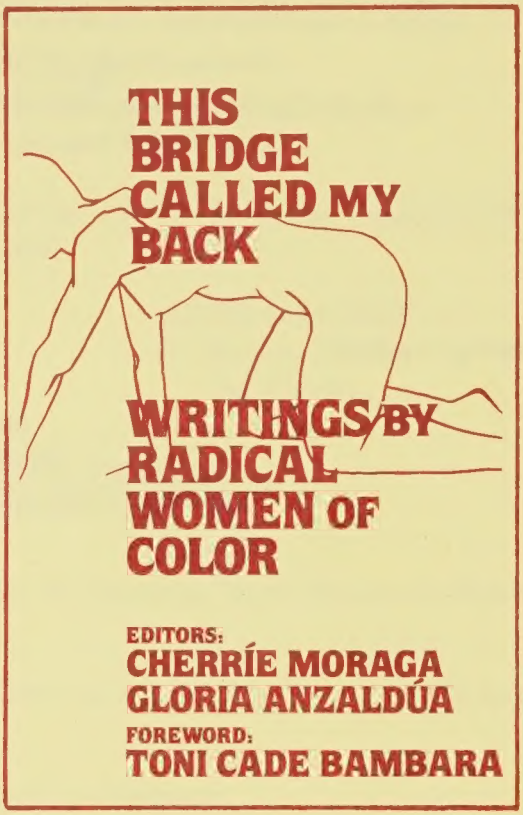
Credits

Written and Directed by Cherríe Moraga,
Kate Rushin, and Barbara Smith

Producers. . . . . .Gloria Z. Greenfield and Pat McGloin (Persephone Press)
Catering. . . . . .Demita (Garden of Sensual Delights) with
Maria-Elena Gonzalez, Evelynn Hammonds, Naomi
Lippin, Yaniyá Pearson, Mercedes Tompkins
Art Exhibit . . . . . .Johnetta Tinker
Music Arrangement . . . . . Melanie Berzon
Sound . . . . . .Myrna Johnston
Lighting. . . . . .Elisa River Stacey
Interpreting for the Hearing Impaired . . . . . .Susan Freundlich
Childcare . . . . . .Janet Fenton
Bookselling . . . . . .New Words Bookstore
House Crew . . . . . Lisa Curado, Fran Demiany, Hollis Fay
Marilyn Greenfield, Maida Tilchen

Susan Freundlich is presently working in Manhattan with the Broadway cast of "Children of A Lesser God." She also teaches sign language in New York City.

"This Bridge Called My Back **intends to reflect an uncompromised definition of feminism by women of color in the United States."**



This groundbreaking anthology contains 45 pieces of prose, poetry, personal narrative and analysis by 29 contributors—Afro-American, Asian American, Latina, and Native American.

"This Bridge lays down the planks to cross over on to a new place where stooped labor cramped quartered down pressed and caged up combatants can straighten the spine and expand the lungs and make the vision manifest."

—Toni Cade Bambara

288 pages $8.95

Persephone Press, P.O. Box 7222, Watertown, Mass. 02172

THIS BRIDGE CALLED MY BACK: How It All Began

In February of 1979, Gloria Anzaldúa attended a women's retreat in the country just north of San Francisco. At Merlin Stone's insistence, three Third World Women were to receive scholarships to her workshop on goddesses and heroines taking place during the retreat. Only one made it -- Gloria. The management and some of the staff made her feel an outsider, the poor relative, the token woman of color. And all because she was not white nor had paid the $150 fee the retreat organizers had set for the workshop. The seed that germinated into this anthology began there in Gloria's talks with Merlin.

What began as a reaction to the racism of white feminists, however, soon became a positive affirmation of the commitment of women of color to our own feminism.

This Bridge Called My Back is named *radical* because it contains the writings of women of color who want nothing short of a revolution in the hands of women -- who agree that that *is* the goal, how ever we might disagree about the getting there or the possibility of seeing it in our own lifetimes. We use the term in its original form -- stemming from the word "root" -- for our feminist politic emerges from both the roots of our cultural oppression and heritage.

In editing the anthology, the primary commitment was to retaining this diversity of heritage, as well as, each writer's especial voice and style. The book reflects our color, loud and clear; it does not tone it down. As editors, Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa sought out and found non-rhetorical, highly personal chronicles that present a political analysis in everyday terms.

Now that this anthology is completed, a hundred other books and projects are waiting to be developed. Already, we hear tell in the wind from other contributors the possibility of a film about Third World Feminists, an anthology by Chicana Lesbians, a Third World Feminist publishing house. We, women of color, are *not* without plans.

This Bridge Called My Back is a catalyst, a revolutionary tool falling into the hands of people of all colors.

Just as we have been radicalized in the process of compiling this book, we hope it will radicalize others into action.

The Participants

Gloria Evanjelina Anzaldúa
I'm a Tejana Chicana poet, hija de Amalia, Hecate y Yemaya. I am a Libra (Virgo cusp) with VI—The Lovers destiny. One day I will walk through walls, grow wings and fly, but for now I want to play Hermit and write my novel, *Andrea*. In my spare time I teach, read the Tarot, and doodle in my journal.

Barbara M. Cameron
Lakota patriot, Hunkpapa, politically non-promiscuous, born with a caul. Will not forget Buffalo Manhattan Hat and Mani. Love Marti, Maxine, Leonie and my family. Still beading a belt for Pat. In love with Robin. Will someday raise chickens in New Mexico.

hattie gossett
born: central new jersey factory town
lives: northern harlem
enjoys: thinking conversating reading jazzing and opposing patripower
work herstory: mother's helper maid cook wife barmaid waitress
forthcoming book: *my soul looks back in wonder/wild wimmin don't git no blues*

Aurora Levins Morales
I was born in Indiera Baja, Puerto Rico in 1954 of a Jewish father and a Puerto Rican mother, both communists. I have lived in the U.S. since I was thirteen & in the Bay Area for five years, where I work as a teacher's aide for pay & as a writer and performer at La Peña Cultural Center for sanity and solidarity.

Cherríe Moraga
I am a very tired Chicana/half-breed/feminist/lesbian/writer/teacher/talker/waitress. And, I am not alone in this. I am the first in my family to ever be published in a book. Of this, I am proud for all of us. Los Angeles born and raised, I recently moved to Boston after three hard-working and transformative years in the San Francisco Bay Area. [Gloria convinced me to further note that I am a libra/virgo cusp with the No. 6 (the lovers) destiny, just like her.]

Rosario Morales
I am a New York Puerto Rican living in Cambridge, Mass.—a feminist independent & communist since 1949. I married, farmed in Puerto Rico, studied science and anthropology and raised three children. I now break a lifetime "silence" to write.

Julia Perez
is a Black Puerto Rican activist, mother, and social worker living in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Donna Kate Rushin
lives in Boston, Massachusetts and works as a Poet-in-the-Schools through the Artists' Foundation. Her work has appeared in *Conditions 5, Small Moon,* and *Shankpainter*. She believes that the fight is the struggle to be whole.

Barbara Smith
I am a Black feminist and Lesbian, a writer, and an activist. I was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1946 and was raised by a family of Black women. I have been a member of the Combahee River Collective since its founding in 1974. My writing has appeared in many Black and feminist publications. I co-edited *Conditions V: The Black Women's Issue* with Lorraine Bethel and *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies* (The Feminist Press) with Gloria T. Hull and Patricia Bell Scott. I am now dreaming of making a film about Third World feminism.

Beverly Smith
I am a 34-year-old Black lesbian. I grew up in Cleveland, Ohio in a family which included my twin sister Barbara, my mother, grandmother, aunt, and greataunts. Sometimes I get sick and tired of trying to be a lesbian feminist which is why I still maintain cordial relationships with my teddy bears.

Nellie Wong
poet/writer/socialist/feminist/cheong hay poa born Oakland Chinatown, thlee yip/American style year-of-the-dog-woman whose feminism grows out of *Dreams in Harrison Railroad Park*/1st Organizer/Women's Writer Union founding member/Unbound Feet/secretary to the spirit of her long time Californ' forbears.

Las Mujeres Partisipando

Gloria Anzaldúa
Poeta Chicana, ocultista y Co-Editora del libro *Este Puente Llamado Mi Espalda*, nacida en el sur de Tejas.

Barbara Cameron
Activista por los derechos de los homosexuales y Nativos Americanos en el área de San Francisco, California.

hattie gossett
Poeta del norte de Harlem, autora del libro *wild wimmin don't get no blues*, New York.

Aurora Levins Morales
Escritora Judía/Puertorriqueña y trabajadora cultural en Oakland, California.

Cherríe Moraga
Escritora Chicana, trabajadora cultural, y Co-Editora del libro *Este Puente Llamado Mi Espalda*, nacida en Los Angeles, California.

Rosario Morales
Escritora Puertorriqueña de Neuva York, Femenista/Independentista/Comunista, residiendo en Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Julia Perez
Activista Puertorriqueña Negra, madre, trabajadora social, residiendo en Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Donna Kate Rushin
Poeta Afro-Norteamericana, actora, y maestra en Boston.

Barbara Smith
Femenista/activista/escritora Afro-Norteamericana. Co-editora de la Revista *Condiciones 5: Edición de la Mujer Negra*, residiendo en Roxbury, Massachusetts.

Beverly Smith
Femenista Afro-Norteamericana, coordinadora de la Serie Fílmica de Artistas Negras [Black Women Artists' Film Series] en Boston/Cambridge.

Nellie Wong
Autora de *Sueños en el Parque Ferroviaro Harrison*, [*Dreams in Harrison Railroad Park*], femenista/socialista, cheong hay poa/Oakland, California.

The Women of Color Press

The *Women of Color Press* is committed to producing and distributing the work of women of color. Although other presses may at times publish work by women of color, it is not their top priority and fewer works by women of color get published by both independent and trade publishers than those of any other racial-sexual group.

On the other hand, the amount and quality of work actually being produced by Third World women writers and artists is phenomenal (especially considering the social and economic conditions under which it is likely to be created) and is in no way accurately reflected by the disproportionately small volume of work that actually gets published. Too often Third World women writers find themselves in the position of having a completed manuscript and then facing the dilemma of having no real options as to where to submit it in order to get it produced.

The establishment of a Third World women's press addresses this need.

A group of Third World women writers, cultural workers, and community activists have been involved in the early planning stages of this venture:

> "I want encouragement—to be as bold as or bolder than I dared to be. A place where my most honest perceptions are not just OK, but the only acceptable offering. I want a place to publish that lets me be a Third World woman the way I experience it, not the way someone else thinks . . ."
>
> "I would say we would want to promote awareness of sexism racism classism ageism homophobia (for openers) & add our voices to the struggle against these demons . . ."
>
> ". . . but the women I want to write to have nothing that is being done for them that is real—all they get is diets and casseroles & love stories & make up & clothes & stand by yo man even if he is kickin yo ass & rapin yo daughter . . ."
>
> "I understand now that what is *different* in perspective between our various groups as women of color is what can make our movement make sense in the lives of women all across this country & stretching out from there. What is *common* between us is what will allow us to work together."

For more information write:

The Women of Color Press
c/o Nut Brown, Inc.
14 Beacon St., Room 103
Boston, MA 02108

Resources for Women of Color

Organizations

Boston Asian Gay Men and Lesbians
c/o Glad Day Bookstore
22 Bromfield Street
Boston, MA 02108
617/542-0144

Casa Myrna Vazquez
617/262-9581
(Shelter for Women and Their Children in Crisis)
(Refugio para mujeres en crisis y sus niños/as)

Combahee River Collective
c/o A.A.S.C.
P.O. Box 1
Cambridge, MA 02139
(Black Feminist Organization)

Publications

Azalea: A Magazine for Third World Lesbians
c/o Gibbs
306 Lafayette Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11238

Conditions: Five,
The Black Women's Issue
P.O. Box 56
Van Brunt Station
Brooklyn, NY 11215

Heresies
Third World Women's Issue
P.O. Box 766
Canal Street Station
New York, NY 10012

Publications (continued)

All the Women Are White,
All the Blacks Are Men,
But Some of Us Are Brave:
Black Women Studies
Gloria Hull, Barbara Smith,
Patricia Bell Scott, eds.
Feminist Press, forthcoming

Latin American Lesbian Anthology/
Antologia Lesbiana Latinamericana
(Forthcoming)
L.A.L.A.
c/o D.L.
170 Ave. C., Apt. 4-H
New York, NY 10009
212/473-6864

Conferences

The Second National Third World Lesbian and Gay Conference
November 27-29, 1981
Chicago, Illinois
For more information contact:
The National Coalition of Black Gays
P.O. Box 57236
West End Station
Washington, D.C. 20037

"...what I like best is what Cliff writes: the struggle to name herself, to say: See, two identities—the white, the black—make one. I am it. To hell with (your) neatness ....To claim all of the self is an act of courage, and is there a limit to what we may claim? The missing link affirmed, connects us to the whole."

—Alice Walker

Claiming an Identity They Taught Me to Despise

Michelle Cliff

"By choosing to explore densities of color and sexuality with a language that is sweet and strong, Michelle Cliff reconstructs a black woman's journey toward self-definition with writing that is brilliant, intense, and unavoidable in its honesty. Rich in imagery that evokes all of our struggles, her words sometimes speak from the edge of my dreams. This book is passage through a sisterhood of selves; as women of color having complementary histories, we are indebted to her."

—Audre Lorde

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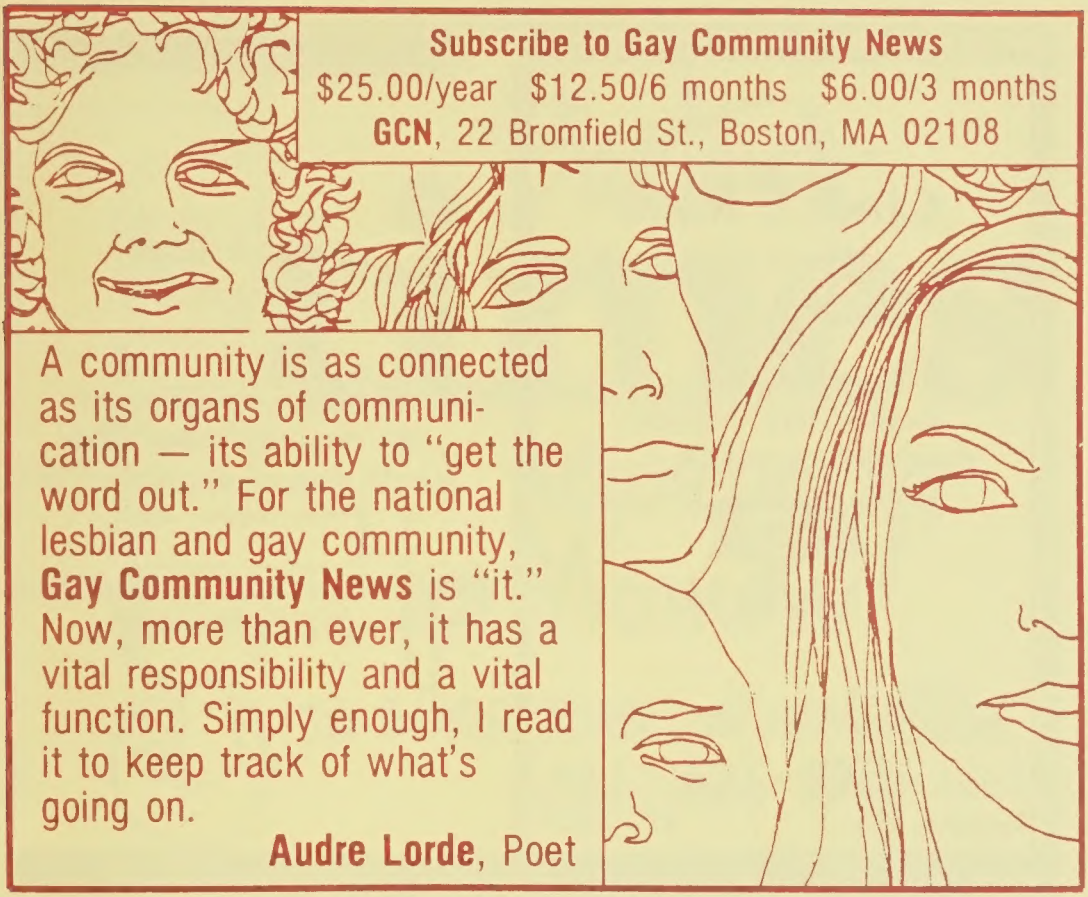

A community is as connected as its organs of communication — its ability to "get the word out." For the national lesbian and gay community, **Gay Community News** is "it." Now, more than ever, it has a vital responsibility and a vital function. Simply enough, I read it to keep track of what's going on.

Audre Lorde, Poet

Working Women's Rights Are in Danger!

Join 9 to 5
and become part of a national movement
to gain rights and respect
for women office workers.
We are beginning a nationwide campaign to ensure
that the Reagan administration does not tamper
with the rights we have worked so hard to obtain.

Call 536-6003 for more information, or
come to the next general meeting
Monday, July 6th, 5:45
at the Paulist Center, 5 Park St., Boston

9 to 5, Organization for Women Office Workers
140 Clarendon, Boston, MA 02116

Cindy T. Rizzo

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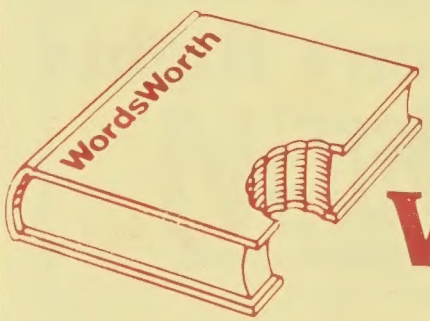

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presents

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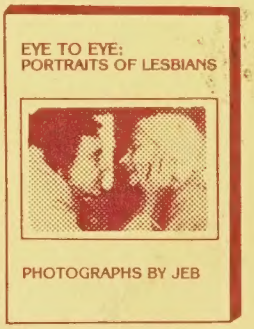
Saturday, June 13

8:00 p.m.
Old Cambridge Baptist Church
1151 Massachusetts Avenue
$3.00
This Show is for Women

This is a comprehensive, powerful 2½ hour presentation of more than 300 photographic images by and of Lesbians. The slide/talk show includes the work of over 30 woman-identified photographers, including Alice Austen and Berenice Abbott. JEB explores a number of themes: Is there a Lesbian sensibility in art? What can be learned about an emerging culture from its image-making? How have Lesbians been represented by photographers who are not woman-identified? JEB has recently published a book of her own photographs entitled *Eye to Eye: Portraits of Lesbians.*



A long piece.

Executive Woman's Pad

STANDING ROCK GIRL

In some dark place, she was conceived perhaps on the dusty road north to the Rattlesnake buttes or down by the Missouri, moonlight on river water.

And there was turmoil and shame is not yet 16. my mother ~~was~~ ~~she~~ Her own life in controversy. Wearing a black leather fringed jacket scarf Knotted around neck lipstick carefully lining the mouth. Dream girl for him.

Winter passed into spring, fresh life mixed with blood and pain. ~~Thunderstorms~~ Thunder and lightening, harsh lifegivers, ~~lets not let the~~ the ~~child~~ child doesn't come quietly and when she does, there is ~~unusual~~ ~~ornance~~. Her body is covered with a thin white ~~membrane~~

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San Francisco, CA 94103
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ON PARADE
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GALLEY 25

by Linda Boyd

A major event of literature, theater and revolution occurred November 12, when over 250 people packed the theatre space of La Pena in Berkeley to attend a reading of *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings of Radical Women of Color.*

Barbara said, "Better get there by 7:30, so you can find parking." Magically, a space awaited near the restaurant; a lull in the rain escorted us inside. At 7:30 we were standing, drinks in hand, behind twenty others before the door to the Community Room. Five minutes later, the line extended down the block outside. The abated storm renewed; we waited on. A long time after we were seated, some time after the program was to begin, someone came onstage and announced: "There are fifty or sixty more people outside in the rain. Let us all scoot our chairs forward as far as possible." The claustrophobics shifted toward the exits; many more filed in after no more chairs could be placed. Tede Matthews was among the latter crowd and, two and one half hours later, proclaimed the reading "beautiful! well worth standing for!"

Ten of twenty-nine contributors to the book were onstage. They were Barbara Cameron, Andrea Canaan, Gabrielle Daniels, Cherrie Moraga, Aurora Levins Morales, Judit Moschkovich, Barbara Smith, Anita Valerio, Nellie Wong and Merle Woo. The poem which inspires the title, "The Bridge Poem" by Donna Kate Rushin, was read by Barbara Cameron:

I've had enough
I'm sick of seeing and touching
Both sides of things
Sick of being the damn bridge for everybody

Nobody
Can talk to anybody
Without me
Right?

I explain my mother to my father
  my father to my little sister
My little sister to my brother
  my brother to the white feminists
The white feminists to the Black church folks
  the Black church folks
To the ex-hippies the ex-hippies to the
  Black separatists the
Black separatists to the artists
  the artists to my friends' parents . . .

Then
I've got to explain myself
To everybody

I do more translating
Than the Gawdamn U.N.

Forget it
I'm sick of it

I'm sick of filling in your gaps

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TG—11-2561
ON PARADE
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GALLEY 26

Sick of being your insurance against
The isolation of your self-imposed limitations
Sick of being the crazy at your holiday dinners
Sick of being the odd one at your Sunday
Brunches
Sick of being the sole Black friend to 34
individual white people

Find another connection to the rest of the
world
Find something else to make you legitimate
Find some other way to be political and hip

I will not be the bridge to your womanhood
Your manhood
Your human-ness

I'm sick of reminding you not to
Close off too tight for too long

I'm sick of mediating with your worst self
On behalf of your better selves

I am sick
Of having to remind you
To breathe
Before you suffocate
Your own fool self

Forget it
Stretch or drown
Evolve or die

The bridge I must be
Is the bridge to my own power
I must translate
My own fears
Mediate
My own weaknesses

I must be the bridge to nowhere
But my true self
And then
I will be useful

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The book is organized into six sections, which became the acts of this work of live theater:

Children Passing in the Streets: The Roots of Our Radicalism

Entering the Lives of Others: Theory in the Flesh

And When You Leave, Take Your Pictures With You: Racism in the Women's Movement

Between the Lines: On Culture, Class, and Homophobia

Speaking in Tongues: The Third World Woman Writer

Mundo Zurdo: The Vision

Especially effective was the poem, "And When You Leave, Take Your Pictures With You" by Jo Carrillo, which was done by the entire group in a speaking chorus.

Because the audience was sympathetic to the message, there was much interruption of the reading by spontaneous applause, foot stamping, and shouts of agreement. But the artists held the stage well, and set a tone at once angry and proud, sad and hopeful. There was such an enthusiastic reception of the writers' return to the stage after the intermission that, when the cheering stopped, Barbara Smith quipped: "We don't even have to do anything but stand up here." It was the faith stirred in us that we were expressing. Cherrie Moraga spoke of this in her reading (excerpted here):

Literally, for two years now, I have dreamed of a bridge. In writing this conclusion, I fight the myriad voices that live inside me. The voices that stop my pen at every turn of the page. They are the voices that tell me here I should be talking more "materialstically" about the oppression of women of color, that I should be plotting out a "strategy" for Third World Revolution. But what I really want to write about is faith. That without faith, I'd dare not expose myself to the potential betrayal, rejection, and failure that lives throughout the first and last gesture of connection.

I am not talking here about some lazy faith, where we resign ourselves to the tragic splittings in our lives with an upward turn of the hands or a vicious beating of our breasts. I am talking about believing that we have the power to actually transform our experience, change our lives, save our lives. Otherwise, why this book? It is the faith of activists I am talking about.

This book is written for all the women in it and all whose lives our lives will touch. We are a family who first only knew each other in our dreams, who have come together on these pages to make faith a reality and to bring all of our selves to bear down hard on that reality.

It is about physical and psychic struggle. It is about intimacy, a desire for life between all of us, not settling for less than freedom even in the most private aspects of our lives. A total vision.

The common revolution of all who are oppressed for any reason gains mighty fuel from this work. The energy generated in that room in Berkeley on that night could have elevated any city. Read *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings of Radical Women of Color* for your own strength and self-discipline. Organize a reading of *This Bridge Called My Back* for all our lives' sake.

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